

California Regional Water Quality Control Board
Santa Ana Region

January 22, 2004

ITEM: 12

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF ADOPTION OF BASIN PLAN AMENDMENT TO
INCORPORATE AN UPDATED TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS (TDS) AND
NITROGEN MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE SANTA ANA REGION

DISCUSSION:

On November 21, 2003 the Regional Board conducted a public workshop to consider an amendment to the Basin Plan to incorporate an update of the total dissolved solids (TDS) and nitrogen management plan for the Santa Ana Basin. The proposed amendment includes revised groundwater subbasin boundaries, revised TDS and nitrate-nitrogen quality objectives for groundwater, revised TDS and nitrogen wasteload allocations, revised reach designations for specific surface waters, revisions to the TDS and nitrogen objectives and beneficial uses for specific surface waters, and TDS and nitrate-nitrogen quality objectives for groundwater that are based on providing "maximum benefit".

An update to the November 21, 2003 staff report and proposed Basin Plan amendment was prepared and made available for public review on December 8, 2003. Additional modifications to both the December 8, 2003 staff report and proposed amendment have been made and are reflected in the attached documents. Most of these revisions are minor and editorial. The only significant change is a clarification of both the Yucaipa Valley Water District (YVWD) and the City of Beaumont (Beaumont)/San Timoteo Watershed Management Agency (STWMA) "maximum benefit" commitments specified in Chapter 5, Section VI.B and Section VI.C. Staff recommends that language be included to specify that application of the proposed "maximum benefit" objectives for the San Timoteo Management Zone, if approved, would be contingent upon implementation of "maximum benefit" commitments by both the YVWD and Beaumont/STWMA.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Requirements

The basin planning process has been certified by the Secretary of Resources as functionally equivalent to the requirement for the preparation of an Environmental Impact report or Negative Declaration. The Regional Board is required to complete an environmental assessment of any changes the Board proposes to make to the Basin Plan. The attached Environmental Checklist determines that there would be no significant adverse environmental impacts from the proposed Basin Plan Amendment.

Specific public notice requirements pertaining to this Basin Plan amendment have been fulfilled. A Notice of Public Hearing was published in newspapers of wide circulation in Orange County, Riverside County and San Bernardino County at least 45 days prior to the hearing. The notices, along with the draft resolution, amendment, environmental

checklist, and staff report, were also made available on the Regional Board website at least 45 days prior to the hearing.

A Notice of Decision will be filed after the Regional Board, the State Board, the Office of Administrative Law and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency act on this matter.

Comments Received

As of January 5, 2004, no substantive comments have been received on the proposed Basin Plan amendment. Written comments have been received from the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority in support of the proposed amendment. The comment is noted and appreciated. No further response is necessary. Staff will prepare written responses to any additional comments received by January 12, 2004, and will modify the proposed amendment appropriately prior to the January 22, 2004 public hearing. Comments received after January 12, 2004 will be addressed orally at the public hearing.

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 57004, the Regional Board is required to obtain Peer Review of the scientific basis for any proposed regulatory provisions. Board staff has submitted the proposed amendment package to the selected peer reviewer, requesting his review by January 13, 2004. Results from the peer review will be distributed to interested parties when available. If warranted by the peer review comments, staff will make revisions to the final proposed amendment presented on January 22, 2004.

This report includes the following attachments:

- January 22, 2004 detailed Staff Report (revised from November 21, 2003 and December 8, 2003)
- Tentative Resolution No. R8-2004-0001, including the proposed Basin Plan Amendment
- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Checklist
- Comment letter from the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Adopt Resolution No. R8-2004-0001, adopting the amendment to the Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) shown in the attachment to the Resolution.